

## Response to IPART's Draft report on CSG Compensation

We need to be able to protect landholders by ensuring that we can say no, that compensation reflects the loss of property values for all the community landholders impacted by CSG, don't let mining companies dictate the terms of access agreements or the terms of reference of enquiries, set up a Royal Commission in to the impact of CSG on the people of Australia, the environment, public health (mental and physical), water and air. Then we may start to believe government is not driven by the donations of the mining industry to political parties, right now their credibility is bugged all and the Tribunal is being driven in its guidelines by what government and the mining industry want at the expense of fair compensation that sees all those impacted put in a position where they are "no better or worse off".

The Tribunal is a farce and only being held to be able to tick off the "public consultation" requirements government use to silence public consultation criticism. If the Tribunal was "fair dinkum" then the guidelines would be expanded to ensure communities were placed in the position of no better or worse off.

The reasons for my comments are;

1. Chief Scientists Report recommendations are not in place, essential for the determination of fair compensation.
2. Community Benefits Fund- not finalised- for the Tribunal to determine compensation it needs to know what the CBF will cover with its funding
3. Tribunal time line needs to be extended so that the CBF is finalised and CS Report has had the recommendations implemented.
4. The omission from the Tribunal's guidelines with regards compensation for the loss of property values due to the impact of CSG.
5. Without baseline studies of all conditions prior to CSG it is impossible to compensate for impacts that have not been monitored and measured from a baseline study.
6. The mining industry has had too much input in to the terms of reference and they are supported by a government dependent on the mining industry's donations and royalties; this is a major conflict of interest.
7. For myself I would prefer it if there was no compensation and that CSG operators were required to purchase all the land they require for their operations, including an adequate buffer around those operations. Coal mines purchase the land they require for their mining, why not CSG. If purchasing the land makes the CSG operation non viable then they never should have been considered in the first place.
8. Why is it that landholders have to cover the loss of their property's value so that CSG companies can make a profit; that is not placing them in a position where they are "no better or worse off"? Landholders are subsidising the CSG industry to the value of that loss of property value on what is likely to be the most valuable asset they will ever own.
9. The issues outside the Tribunal's guidelines that need to be addressed;
  - a. (the view that) compensation cannot address the risks posed by the gas industry (page 7 Tribunal's draft report)
  - b. Tribunal cannot fully assess all compensation components until finalisation of Community Benefits Fund and implementation of recommendations of Chief Scientist's Report
  - c. Scope of tribunal too narrow- does not address all the impacts of CSG such as subsurface impact of CSG operations, industry failures, health, water, environment etc.
  - d. No option to deny access to CSG so landholders are not in a position to negotiate strongly with CSG industry
  - e. No consideration of making CSG industry purchase all the land they require to operate, including the land that they drill under.
  - f. No compensation for loss of property values
  - g. No Royal Commission in to the impacts of CSG on the public and environment and the relationship of the mining industry with government , in particular to donations, exchange of personnel, ex parliamentarians taking up jobs within the mining industry.
  - h. There are no designated "Gas Free Areas" which would give the communities comfort in knowing that CSG would be prohibited in their area.

The draft report recommends that compensation only be paid to neighbours for such things as noise and hours of operations and only when they exceed reasonable levels. This is a “get out of jail free card” for a mining industry that has a huge track record of non compliance and a cost/monitoring imposition on landholders who are not in a time scale or financial position to afford. Self monitoring by the industry or government influenced EPA is a joke.

If the mining industry finds it uneconomic to buy the land they require for their operations or can't afford to pay the compensation for the loss of property values then the project should be considered financially non viable; private individuals should not all be left to bare the cost of mining company operations just so that mining can make a profit at the expense of those individuals.

The tribunal recommends legislative changes to ensure fair compensation (as far as the tribunal's restrictive and limited compensation guidelines allows) for landholders. This is an absolute farce considering the tribunals limited scope to address fair compensation.